



Minutes of the Farmland Conservation Easement Commission Meeting

**Jefferson County Courthouse, Room 203
320 S. Main St.
Jefferson, WI 53549**

Monday, April 8, 2013, 12:30 pm

Members: Margaret Burlingham (Chairperson), Amy Rinard (Vice-Chairperson), Mariah Hadler (Secretary), Steve Nass and Blane Poulson.

1. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Burlingham at 12:32 pm.
2. Roll Call
Commission members present included Hadler, Burlingham, Rinard, John Molinaro (ex-officio), Nass and Poulson. County staff present was Michelle Staff (Zoning Department), Phil Ristow (Corporation Counsel) and Gerry Kokkonen (Land and Water Conservation Department).
3. Certification of Compliance With Open Meetings Law Requirements
Burlingham and Staff verified that the meeting was being held in compliance with open meetings law requirements.
4. Review of Agenda
No changes were proposed to the agenda.
5. Public Comment
No public comment.
6. Communications
Burlingham stated that the Commission is invited to a fundraising event for the Natural Heritage Land Trust on April 25th.

Rodell Lea handed out a copy of A Guide to Conservation Easements for Agricultural Landowners from New Mexico.

Burlingham handed out a flyer from the Kentucky Equine Land Conservation Resource which stated "The loss of land for horse-related activities is the greatest threat to horse sport, industry, and recreation in the United States."
7. Review & Approval of the March 12, 2013 Minutes
Motion made by Rinard, seconded by Poulson to approve the March 12, 2013 minutes. **Motion** carried on a voice vote with no objection.
8. Discussion on the State Budget in Regards to AEAs and the PACE Program
Burlingham stated that Bill Berry, the Wisconsin Director of the American Farmland Trust, sent out several e-mails about the proposed state budget having no funds for the PACE program. Burlingham indicated that Berry asked around the Capitol to add funding for PACE and did not get support. Many of the legislators stated that the State will be focusing on the AEAs. Burlingham stated

that the Commission can send a letter to the State budget public hearing in regard to support of funding for the PACE program.

The Towns Association and DATCP will be having Working Lands workshops in Tomah on April 23 and in Shawano on April 25th. Burlingham plans to attend one of the workshops.

9. Discussion on interest forms received for the PACE program

a. Roger Lehmann

Burlingham stated that the Commission sent Lehmann a letter in regard to three issues: Lehmann has two underground tanks that need to be NRCS compliant, a sediment control structure that needs repairs because it is not meeting current NRCS standards and the fact that the farm is required to have a nutrient management plan. Burlingham has discussed the issues with Lehman. He is still interested and plans to rectify the three issues. There was discussion on the underground tanks and how to verify that they weren't leaking. Burlingham will discuss this issue with NRCS. There was discussion on the possibility of getting matching funds for the Lehmann easement from other non-profits such as Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever.

10. Discussion and Possible Action on 2011 PACE Applications

The second appraisal for Dale Neupert's land has been completed. Ron Howard from NRCS has stated that the easement language has been sent to Washington but that he has not heard back from them. Kokkonen sent a completed baseline report to Neupert for review.

Wilke got an EQIP grant to correct the barnyard runoff issue on the property and when weather permits the project will be completed.

11. Easement Donation from Rodell Lea, Town of Oakland

Lea stated that he would like to wait to donate due to circumstances with the sale of a building lot that would affect this parcel.

12. Discussion on Possible Funding Sources for the PACE Program

See item number 8 on State budget update.

13. Discussion on January 29, 2013 Workshop

It was noted that the County Fair is July 10 – 14 and is fast approaching. Molinaro stated that there will be a booth for County information where the Commission can set out their poster and brochures. The Dairy Breakfast will be June 1st at Jefferson County Fair Park, where again the Commission can set out promotional information.

The Commission talked about educating the public on the PACE program at the farmers' markets. They would like to start by Memorial Day. Hadler stated that she has 7 students from Fort Atkinson High School and college students that can help create promotional materials and be available at the farmers' market. Some promotional materials discussed were stickers, videos on laptop, t-shirts, etc. The Commission will set up a meeting with the students and discuss their ideas with them. It was agreed upon that the Commission will meet at Salamone's in Fort Atkinson.

The discussion turned to the fall event at Rod Lea's farm. The Commission agreed that the date of the event would be Saturday, October 5th from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. The Commission must pick a name for the event and create flyers for it. The Commission needs to decide on entertainment, food, activities for kids and adults, etc. There were suggestions on local groups to play at the event and having a coupon at the farmers' markets for free ice cream at the event. A map is needed on how to get to Lea's farm. There was a suggestion on having someone design invitations and literature for the event; it was discussed that the students would be responsible for that. Entertainment will be a local band. There will be hay rides, the band, ice cream, animals and UW Extension agents available, etc. There would be a need for parking, sanitary facilities, food tent, etc.

There was discussion on the message the Commission wants to educate the public on and why it is important for the public to support the preservation of farmland. There was talk about a hay ride with UW-Extension agency staff discussing the importance of saving farmland. There was discussion on getting the message on the importance of saving farmland through the schools. Hadler stated that she has sent flyers through the Fort School District but stated that not all school systems allow this. Discussion about library programs during the summer. It was mentioned that we should promote locally grown foods through restaurants, stores, local businesses, local dairies, eggs, etc to make connections between what is on their plate and where the food comes from. Lea will check the date to make sure it works for his partner. Hadler will contact the students for a meeting. Moliaro will contact UW Extension to make sure they are available. Nass will contact the Lake Mills School District to see if they will distribute flyers. Poulson will contact a local band to see if they would be interested in participating. Rinard will contact locally owned businesses to see if they would donate.

14. Future Meeting Dates

All meeting dates were acceptable to the Commission members.

15. Suggestions for the Next Agenda

None

16. Adjourn

Motion by Hadler, seconded by Nass to adjourn the meeting at 1:53 p.m. **Motion** carried on a voice vote with no objection.

Secretary Signature

Date

Minutes by Michelle Staff, Zoning Technician, Jefferson County Planning and Zoning Department